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STAGED AUTHENTICITY AND HERITAGE TOURISM

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Abstract: Much of today's heritage tourism product depends on the staging or re-creation of ethnic or cultural traditions. This study analyzes the role of perceived authenticity as a measure of product quality and as a determinant of tourist satisfaction. The event studied was the Flora Macdonald Scottish Highland Games held in North Carolina (United States). Tourists and event organizers were asked to evaluate the authenticity of specific festival events on a Likert scale. The study revealed that high perception of authenticity can be achieved even when the event is staged in a place far away from the original source of the cultural tradition. Important differences in perceived authenticity were observed among various groups of visitors. **Keywords:** heritage, authenticity, festival, Scottish Highland Games. © 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Résumé: La mise en scène de l'authenticité et le tourisme patrimonial. Une grande partie du produit du tourisme patrimonial actuel dépend de la mise en scène ou de la reproduction des traditions ethniques ou culturelles. Cet article analyse le rôle de l'authenticité perçue comme mesure de qualité et comme déterminant de la satisfaction touristique. L'événement qui a été étudié était les Jeux Écossais Flora Macdonald, qui ont eu lieu en Caroline du Nord (Etats-Unis). On a demandé aux touristes et aux organisateurs de l'événement d'évaluer l'authenticité des activités spécifiques du festival sur une échelle Likert. L'étude a révélé qu'une haute perception d'authenticité peut être atteinte même si l'événement est monté dans un endroit qui est loin de la source originelle de la tradition culturelle. On a noté d'importantes différences dans les perceptions d'authenticité parmi les divers groupes de visiteurs. **Mots-clés:** tourisme patrimonial, authenticité, tourisme de festival, Jeux Écossais. © 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, heritage tourism has gained increasing attention, and has generated a growing body of literature (Balcar and Pearce

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1996; Fyall and Garrod 1998; Herbert 2001; Hollinshead 1988; Poria, Butler and Alrey 2001). Fyall and Garrod define heritage tourism as an economic activity that makes use of socio-cultural assets to attract visitors. Hollinshead (1988) asserts that local traditions and community heritage can serve as attractions and that heritage tourism embraces folkloric traditions, arts and crafts, ethnic history, social customs, and cultural celebrations. Poria et al define heritage tourism more narrowly as “a phenomenon based on visitors’ motivations and perceptions *rather than* on specific site attributes” (2001:1047). Zeppal and Hall also emphasize motivation, and view heritage tourism, as “based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms” (1991:49).

In terms of demand, heritage tourism is representative of many contemporary visitors’ desire (hereafter, tourists) to directly experience and consume diverse past and present cultural landscapes, performances, foods, handicrafts, and participatory activities. On the supply side, heritage tourism is widely looked to as a tool for community economic development and is often actively promoted by local governments and private businesses. However, there is little quantitative information that would help planners determine heritage tourism demand and the behavioral structure(s) underlying it (Alzua et al 1998; Light and Prentice 1994; Richards 1996). Poria et al argue that understanding motivations and perceptions “is helpful for the management of [heritage] sites with respect to such factors as pricing policy, the mission of heritage attractions, and understanding visitor profiles, as well as public funding and sustainable management...” (2001:1048). Such information would be especially useful to communities trying to promote heritage tourism, as it could lead to development of products best fitted to the tastes of potential tourists.

An important attribute of heritage tourism is authenticity, or at least the perception of it (Boniface and Fowler 1993; Taylor 2001; Waitt 2000). In fact, focus on authenticity is a basic principle for this type of tourism development (Fischer 1999). This study focuses on the role of perceived authenticity in a festival (subset of heritage tourism), using the case of Scottish Highland games in the State of North Carolina, United States. Based on a sample survey, it quantifies the level of authenticity perceived by those attending the festival, explores differences in their perceptions, and relates perceived authenticity to their overall satisfaction. The study also investigates perceptions of specific events (such as athletic competition and clan activities). Further, the relationship is tested between perceived level of authenticity and total festival-related expenditure incurred in the region. The objective is to better understand the role of perceived authenticity as a measure of product quality and as a determinant of tourist satisfaction.

Many (Clapp 1999; Cohen 1988) believe that the quality of heritage tourism is enhanced by authenticity. Other scholars (Boorstin 1991; Bruner 1991; MacCannell 1976; Van den Berghe 1984) point out that the authenticity of events and attractions is staged and distorted to suit the needs of both the “guests” and their “hosts”. Much research, mostly qualitative, has been done in this field (Hughes 1995; MacCannell

1976; Taylor 2001; Urry 1992; Wang 1999). But there have been only a handful of quantitative studies of how authenticity is related to motivation, perception and level of satisfaction.

In one such study, Pocock (1992) surveyed tourists to South Tyneside (United Kingdom), a town whose image was created by a popular fiction writer, Catherine Cookson. The literary source was found to sharply influence the way people saw the destination. They confirmed having an authentic experience and asserted that their expectations were based upon the image created in their minds by Cookson's novel. Pocock notes "the power of secondary sources in general forge expectations and bolster the urge for travel" (1992:243). Waitt (2000) examined perception of authenticity of "The Rocks", a historical neighborhood in Australia restored and redesigned by the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority. Waitt's study revealed important differences in the perceived level of authenticity related to gender, place of residence, and age. Male repeaters perceived The Rocks to be authentic. On the other hand, young female tourists from overseas had the greatest propensity to be skeptical about the authenticity of their experience.

Cohen (1995) has observed that a wide variety of conceptual and theoretical approaches to tourism have yet to be rigorously tested; as well, a proliferation of field studies lack an explicit theoretical orientation and therefore contribute little to theory building. This study on Scottish Games is intended as a step in that direction.

Meaning and Importance of Authenticity

Built environments (such as historical homes, castles, and industrial sites) are perhaps the most obvious manifestations of heritage and the most popular destinations of heritage tourism. But in terms of cultural production (recreation and display of culture), some of the largest and most visited destinations are cultural heritage festivals. They have become a major focus of tourism in the postmodern period (Gartner and Holecek 1983; Ryan 1998).

Any cultural production can serve one of the two essential functions: "it may add to the weight of the modern civilization by sanctifying an original as being a model worthy of copy or it may establish a new direction, break new grounds, or otherwise contribute to the progress of modernity by presenting new combinations of cultural elements" (MacCannell 1976:81). The authenticity targeted today by heritage festival tourism is a blend of both these functions. First, an attempt is made to copy the original; then the copy is modified to meet the needs of the modern community.

Products of tourism such as festivals, rituals, dress, and so on are usually described as authentic or inauthentic depending upon whether they are made or enacted by local people according to tradition (MacCannell 1976). In this sense, authenticity connotes traditional culture and origin, and a sense of the genuine. Within cultural tourism, the production of authenticity is dependent on some act of reproduction (Zerubavel 1995). As Taylor states,

Tourism sites, objects, images, and even people are not simply viewed as contemporaneous productions. Instead, they are positioned as signifiers of past events, epochs, or ways of life. In this way, authenticity is equated as original (2001:33).

The present-day authenticity pays homage to the “original” concept.

MacCannell (1976) says that a central aspect of the culture of modernity is the quest for authentic experience. Tourism, which emerges as a part of this quest, is based upon the belief that authentic experience resides outside the boundary of everyday life in contemporary society (MacCannell 1976). People think either the past was better or lives outside their space are better. According to Fine and Speer (1997), an authentic experience involves participation in a collective ritual, where strangers get together in a cultural production to share a feeling of closeness or solidarity. This cultural production is not a total re-creation of the past. In fact, nostalgic collective memory selectively reconstructs the past to serve needs of the present (MacCannell 1979).

People are nostalgic about old ways of life, and they want to relive them in the form of tourism, at least temporarily. Nostalgia is a universal catchword for looking back. Lowenthal says, “if the past is a foreign country, nostalgia has made it a foreign country with the healthiest visitor trade of all” (1990:4). Given this centrality of nostalgia as a motivation for tourism, it is hypothesized that satisfaction with a heritage event depends not on its authenticity in the literal sense of whether or not it is an accurate re-creation of some past condition, but rather on its perceived authenticity (consistency with nostalgia for some real or imagined past). Heritage is thus created and re-created from surviving memories, artifacts, and sites of the past to serve contemporary demand. Heritage has many creators, purposes, and consumers (Ashworth 1992; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). Not every component of the experience need be authentic (or even satisfactory) so long as the combination of elements generates the required nostalgic feelings.

Staged Authenticity

MacCannell (1979) introduced the concept of “staged authenticity” in the context of ethnic tourism. Tourees (hosts) put their culture (including themselves) on sale in order to create an appealing package. MacCannell says, “to the degree that this packaging alters the nature of the product, the authenticity sought by the visitor becomes ‘staged authenticity’ provided by the touree” (1979:596). He refers to the staged concept when his tourists turn to search for originals and consequently become victims of staged authenticity. For him, experiences cannot be counted as authentic even if people themselves might think they have achieved such experiences (Wang 1999).

Crick, by contrast, points out that there is a sense in which all cultures are “staged” and are in a certain sense inauthentic. “Cultures are invented, remade and the elements reorganized” (Crick 1989:65). Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) offer dozens of examples of how new

cultural practices can eventually become embedded as important traditions, their origins forgotten or romanticized. Cohen has offered the concept of “emergent authenticity” to describe this evolutionary process. He describes authenticity as “negotiable,” so that “a cultural product, or trait thereof, which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognized as authentic” (1988:279–80). Hence, it is not clear why the apparently inauthentic staging for the tourist is so very different from what happens in all cultures anyway. Cohen (1988) contends that different people have different perspectives and needs. For example, there may be differences between those who have experienced the “real” culture and those who have not. There may be differences by gender, income and other socioeconomic variables. Moreover, because heritage tourism has an educational role, the more learned, the more discriminating the tourist becomes.

Staged Authenticity of Scottish Highland Games

Modern Highland Games are staged authenticity, since they are reconstructed in the memory of a Scottish Highland past. Scotland is a small UK region whose people are scattered in British-settled areas across the globe. “In that scattering, they took with them a love of their country and their heritage that could not be destroyed. This love has passed on to succeeding generations, and has remained strong enough to stir those whose hearts are in the Highlands whether they have actually been there or not” (Donaldson 1986:3). Today, Highland Games are thriving in Scotland itself and in other countries, such as Canada, and the United States and New Zealand.

In Scotland, the games have been a popular cultural event for over 900 years, although they vanished for a period after the Scots were defeated by the English at Culloden in 1746. Fifty years later, they were revived. Ironically, they were promoted by the English monarchy, who had been responsible for the destruction of the Scottish clans. In the 19th century, Queen Victoria bestowed her patronage on one of the games, the Braemar Royal Gathering. Thus, the games in Scotland itself are authentic in that they were composed of traditional activities, but staged in the sense that they served both the Scots and their English conquerors. Another important source of promotion in the early 1800s was Sir Walter Scott and other authors who introduced the notion of romanticism into the Highland past. The images presented by Scott are not those of eviction, poverty, famine, and increasing dependency on the landlords but ones of tartan kilts and glen romanticism (Jarvie 1991). Scott’s novels and poems generated an aura of nostalgia for the Highlander way of life.

Thousands of Scots migrated to North America immediately after the defeat at Culloden and throughout the hard times of the 18th century. Scottish Highland Games came to the United States in 1836. In North America, Scots first gathered to seek out and share their games heritage. However, these activities, with their opportunities for display of Scottish heritage, also attracted outsiders (Donaldson 1986).

Today, there are a remarkable number of places where these games are currently staged, including Glasgow (Kentucky), Stone Mountain (Georgia), St. Paul (Minnesota), Chicago (Illinois), and even Tucson (Arizona). The expansion of the games in the United States in the 70s led to the creation in 1981 of a non-profit organization, the Association of Scottish Games and Festivals. According to Donaldson, its purpose was:

To encourage, support, and assist member organizations on the production and presentation of Scottish Games and Festivals. Such endeavors provide a means of celebrating, encouraging, and perpetuating the rich heritage accruing to persons of Scottish heritage and descent, and present, for the enjoyment and benefit of all people, those aspects of Scottish culture and tradition for which the Scottish people are known the world over (1986:42).

In other words, attempts were made to simultaneously celebrate heritage for persons of Scots descent and to demonstrate aspects of the heritage to a more general group of people. Thus, commercial tourism and outdoor recreation blended with nostalgic history is used to promote these games.

The Invention of Tradition

According to Donaldson, "When you are witnessing these events you are witnessing a representation of a way of life" (1986:41). But it is a reproduction that contains some cultural traditions that have changed little and others that are much changed or even newly invented.

One example of how elements of Scottish culture change over time is the evolution of the tartan, well documented in the Scottish Tartan Museum in Franklin, North Carolina. New tartans are created to give symbolic significance to new emerging groups or celebrations. One such example is the Georgia tartan, first designed and woven in 1982. The Stone Mountain Highland Games, Inc. commissioned the Scottish Tartan Society to design and weave the tartan in honor of Georgia's Semiquincentenary Celebration which coincided with the 10th Annual Games and Scottish Festival at Stone Mountain, near Atlanta. It has been said that the pattern and colors of Georgia Tartan are a reflection of the State's strong ties with Scotland (Tartans 1997). Even though new tartans are emerging, according to Jarvie (1991), the tartan tradition is authentic. He notes that not only the wearing of the kilt but also the numerous tartan symbols provide this tradition with a specific sense of Highland cultural identity.

Scottish country dancing is the traditional ballroom dancing of Scotland. It is not a sword dance and fling as performed by Highland dancers. "Rather it is a social dance whose winding patterns are reminiscent of interlacing Celtic knotwork, and whose circle, line, and square formations came from the lowlands and other parts of Britain" (GMHG magazine 1997:15). Dances are handed down from generation to generation, but new ones are continually being devised, as this is a living art form (Cornelia and Stewart 1993). However, pipers, who

originally played for the dancers, had to be replaced by fiddlers after the English banned the pipes in the 18th century. The constant infusion of creativity even into traditional ethnic dances seems to be characteristic of dance in general (Daniel 1996).

Scottish athletic events at most of the Highland games are divided into amateur and professional categories. According to Groves and Stewart, tossing the caber (a long tree trunk) has changed little over centuries and was considered strictly a Scottish event. The shot put (putting the stone) "had been a traditional test of strength in the Highlands of Scotland for centuries" (1993:21). The hammer throw became popular in the Scottish Highlands as a pastime among young men who gathered at the local blacksmith's shop and used his hammer (GMHG magazine 1999a). "Today, a special wire shafted hammer is used for amateur international events. However, Scots still use a wooden shafted hammer and stick to the old rule that a thrower must not move". The present day tug-of-war is a combination of contests popular in one form or another in rural life, in the military and in the Navy in Scotland (Groves and Stewart 1993:22,24).

The parade of clan groups, led by their tartan banners, is a well-loved part of all Highland games today. The Parade of the Tartans varies, but the appeal is universal. This activity was introduced in 1964 by the organizers of the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, in the belief that spectators should be involved in the games. This event has become one of the most spectacular and popular events at the games and they serve "as a role model for virtually every other Scottish Games" (Groves and Stewart 1993:31). Thus, the Parade of the Tartans is a newly constructed event and was not handed down from generations.

Next, one of the most melodious sounds of the Highland games is that of the Scottish harp. In the Highlands, harpists used to accompany clan chiefs to battle until the bagpipes replaced them in the 16th century. The clan harpist performed for both joyous and sad occasions. He was also responsible for playing the clan to sleep. The history is long gone. But the Harp continues in a staged set up. This staging is not necessarily superficial since it follows the old guidelines. Further, bagpipe playing is an integral part of today's gatherings. "The playing of the (bagpipe) is a central tenet of the Highland tradition, albeit reproduced in a changed and modernized form. Yet, it serves in part as a symbol of Highland cultural identity and has also developed out of the tradition of the Piobere who held an important position within the old Highland clan" (Jarvie 1991:36). Once again, today's element has developed out of a number of antecedent cultural forms that have their point of origin and meaning firmly rooted within the Highland clan formation.

Thus, while some staged events have become modernized, both their specific historical roots and the fact that they are staged in a remarkably similar way in games across the United States provide evidence of authenticity. Most of the athletic events can be traced back to their traditional past. Harp and piping follow old guidelines. So do most of the athletic events. The Parade of Tartans is a new event and cannot

be traced back to ancient times. However, it can still be argued that they are an embodiment of Scottish spirit and most of the tartans themselves are traditional designs. Highland dancing is a progressive art form, but it can be argued that authenticity can be manifested in cultural evolution and not just strict preservation.

North Carolina (in the southeastern United States) is a popular site for annual "Scottish Highland Games." North Carolina was one of the earliest places where Scottish Highlanders emigrated after their defeat at Culloden. The culture and tradition they brought with them was authentic, since it originated in Scotland and was perpetuated by nostalgic memories of the past. Scots stage Highland games today to display and promote their traditions and to deepen their commitment to their community. They are run by non-profit organizations, which have an avowed objective of preserving and promoting Scottish heritage. Yet, despite their "authentic" origin, North Carolina's Highland games are far removed in both space and time from their cultural source. Moreover, many of the tourists have no personal experience of Scotland and, in fact, may not even claim Scottish ancestry. The games are clearly a staged attraction, and are regarded by nearby communities and North Carolina's tourism office as one of the local festivals that provide economic benefits in the rural parts of the State.

Main activities are Highland dancing, musical events, Scottish athletic events, Parade of the Tartans, sheep dog (Border Collie) demonstrations, clan gatherings, and purchase of Scottish souvenirs. Though closely resembling ballroom dancing, some dances are very old and are thought to originate in ancient rituals (Donaldson 1986; GMHG 1999b; Groves and Stewart 1993). Musical events include solo piping and drumming competitions, fiddling, harp and Scottish folk songs. Highland athletic events include tossing the caber (a heavy wooden pole), shot put, throwing the hammer, wrestling, and tug-of-war. Parade of the Tartans is a march of the clan groups led by their banners. The Border Collies, whose skills are demonstrated at most games, are trained as working dogs to gather, drive, and separate all types of farm animals (Groves and Stewart 1993). Clan gatherings are held at their respective tents and constitute socializing of fellow members and manufacture and sale of related items, such as tartans and genealogical books. Purchase of Scottish souvenirs in general is also available, including Highland wear and accessories, tartans, Scottish foods, CDs, music and heritage books, and supplies for piping, drumming and dancing.

The main objective of Flora Macdonald Highland Games (FMHG) in North Carolina is the promotion of Scottish culture (interview with the General Manager of the Flora MacDonald Highland Games 2000). Its General Manager relies mostly on word-of-mouth publicity even though other promotional strategies are used (such as advertisement in the local newspapers and Highland Games magazines). Websites have proved to be an important tool for promotion. During an interview, the manager said that the authenticity of the games was maintained through the careful selection of events, involvement of pioneers from Scotland and the fact that they are non-profit organizations. As

depicted in their brochure, the games are marketed as a heritage tourism activity:

Watch as the muscular athletes participate in the ancient sporting events. Enjoy the dancers of all ages compete in the colorful and graceful dances of the Highlands. Take an excursion into your Scottish heritage by investigating your genealogy. Enjoy a taste of Scotland with a Southern flair.

The authenticity of such events is important. In addition to information provided by literature, participants and tourists can be an important source of information on authenticity. This study aims to analyze the role of perceived authenticity as a measure of product quality and as a determinant of tourist satisfaction at the Flora MacDonald Highland Games.

ANALYSIS OF AUTHENTICITY IN HERITAGE TOURISM

Methodology and Data

The authenticity of a festival and its staging are analyzed through tourist responses to surveys conducted at the [FMHG in October 2000](#). Self-administered questionnaire is a commonly used technique, whose random distribution can represent all population segments at a festival. Onsite technique was chosen over the mailed questionnaire to avoid the possibility of an unrepresentative sample. Another objective was to obtain a random sample of all types of people attending the festival (besides the members). The Highland games office did not maintain a complete mailing list of all those surveyed.

The expected number of those participating in the game was 4,000 (interview with the Flora MacDonald Highland Games 2000). A random sample of 500 visitors was selected for the survey. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed (one per family) at all entrances, at different times of the day (morning and afternoon), each marked with separate colors. It was noted that the returned survey consisted of an equal proportion of morning and afternoon questionnaires.

The response rate was 24% (120 surveys). A survey study conducted at another Highland games (Grandfather Mountain Highland Games) in North Carolina provided a similar response rate. The socioeconomic characteristics of visitors at FMHG were also found to be similar to the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games ([Chhabra 2001](#)). Literature review has revealed that response rate of 25–35% for onsite self-administered surveys is not unusual ([Kaylen, Washington and Osburn 1998](#); [Nogowa, Yamaguchi and Hagi 1996](#)). Hence, based upon the representative sample, the survey results are assumed to be reliable.

The surveys asked for a variety of information with regard to age, gender, income, number of nights spent, postal code, number of people per group, and their expenditures. Further, they were asked if they were members of a clan (an extended Scottish family or Scottish tribe) and if they had visited Scotland. To determine the role of nostalgia in their experience, they were asked if the games created nostalgia for their Scottish past and if personal memories were revived.

To measure perceived authenticity, respondents were asked to rate specific events and activities on a five point Likert scale, with higher values representing greater perceived authenticity. Events taken into account were Highland dancing, Parade of the Tartans, Highland games setting, and purchase of Scottish souvenirs. Authenticity was also rated for more generalized activities such as learning Scottish history, family gathering, making new friends, and interacting with fellow clan members. Aggregating these ratings, a comprehensive variable ("authentic") is created which gives the mean authenticity rating. The study uses univariate statistics, ordinary least square (OLS) regression models, and analysis of variance methods (ANOVA) using SAS (statistical analysis software) and LIMDEP (econometric software). All categorical variables are used as dummy variables in the OLS models.

Total expenditures and age are used in logarithmic form to overcome the problem of heteroskedasticity (high values of skewness and kurtosis). Further, respondents are divided into two groups based on postal code information: those who had their residence in the host county for the games (local) and others who resided outside the county. Income is also divided into six categories (Table 1).

Respondents' average age was 47 years. They spent an average of 0.48 nights in the host county, and the average group size was five

Table 1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Male	38%
	Female	62%
Accompanied by	Family	53%
	Friends	16%
	Others	3%
	None	9%
	Family and friends	17%
Income	<\$20,000	5%
	\$20,000–\$40,000	19%
	\$40,000–\$60,000	33%
	\$60,000–\$80,000	20%
	\$80,000–\$100,000	12%
	> \$100,000	11%
Income (divided into two groups)	Below \$40,000	23%
	Above \$40,000	77%
Age	<25 years	2%
	25–35 years	16%
	35–45 years	29%
	45–55 years	31%
	>55 years	23%
Postal code	Respondents residing in the FMHG region	40%
	Respondents residing outside the FMHG region	60%

people. Most (70%) were family or family and friends. Univariate descriptive statistics are given in [Table 1](#). Besides, approximately 50% were members of a clan, 96% had nostalgic memories of the Scottish past, and 63% felt that the games revived memories of their own Scottish past. Among respondents, 19% did not have Scottish heritage and 41% had been to Scotland. Average expenditure incurred was \$108 per group. The average rating of authenticity for all the events on a five point Likert scale was four ([Table 1](#)).

Study Findings

Tourism necessarily involves day dreaming and anticipation of new or different experiences from those normally encountered in everyday life. But such daydreams are not autonomous; they involve working over advertising and other media-generated sets of signs, many of which relate very clearly to complex processes of social emulation. So it is important to understand what the tourists think is authentic and to study the behavior among them. The approach parallels [Waitt’s \(2000\)](#) exploration of the relation between various demographic and socioeconomic variables and the perceived authenticity of a heritage tourism experience. The present study also looks at how perceived authenticity is related to expenditure behavior.

Approximately, 68.3% of the people visited FMHG to seek authentic Scottish goods. Other important features identified were authentic Scottish food (60.4%), outdoor recreation and spectacle (60.3%), information on Scottish heritage (57.4%), and athletic competition (48.6%). All of these are characteristics for which authenticity is likely to be important. However, there is a substantial percent of the respondents who were just seeking outdoor recreation and spectacle. Highland dancing was considered to be the most authentic item, followed by Parade of the Tartans, learning Scottish history, Highland games setting, and purchase of souvenirs ([Table 2](#)).

This study looks at differences of the level of perceived authenticity

Table 2. Perceived Level of Authenticity

Items offered at the Games	Authenticity Scale (1–5) Mean Rating	Standard Deviations of the Mean rating
Highland dancing	4.2	.8
Parade of Tartans	4.0	1.0
Learning Scottish history	3.8	1.2
Highland Games setting	3.7	1.0
Scottish souvenirs	3.5	1.1
Family gathering	3.5	1.3
Interacting with your clan	3.5	1.3
Family reunion	3.4	1.3
Authentic (overall rating)	4	1.0

across various groups (Table 3). ANOVA tests were conducted to see if there were any differences in the mean perceived overall level of authenticity among clan and non-clan members, those who had been to Scotland versus those who had not, and respondents who felt the games revived Scottish memories versus those who did not. Further, differences in the mean perceived overall level of authenticity were also tested (ANOVA) between males and females who had been to Scotland versus those who had not. The results reveal that clan members do perceive significantly higher levels of authenticity (with a p value of .02), as do those who report that the games revive personal memories of Scotland (with a p value of .002). Whether or not a person had visited Scotland is not significantly related to perceptions of authenticity. However, if respondents are separated by gender, women who had visited Scotland have a significantly higher overall rating of authenticity.

An OLS regression model is used to determine the effect of the Scottish heritage variables (clan member, revived memories, and visited Scotland) on perceived levels of authenticity. These variables when regressed together had a significant effect upon the authenticity rating. The overall model was significant with a p value of .02. Looking at the individual effects, the results reveal that members of a clan gave higher authenticity ratings than non-members at .10 level. While controlling for other variables, the t value for the "revival of Scottish memory" variable at .02 level revealed that the groups for whom Highland games revived personal memories perceived them to be more authentic than their counterparts.

Authenticity perceptions of different age groups and different income categories were tested and were not found to be significantly different. The general pattern among age groups is that younger

Table 3. Difference in Perceived Authenticity Scores for the Highland Games

Independent Variables	Perceived Authenticity Scores		Results of two-way ANOVA	N
	Mean rating			
	Yes	No		
Revived memories	4.0	3.3	F value = 6.17 P value = .003	97
Clan member	3.9	3.7	F value = 5.80 P value = .020	104
Visited Scotland	3.8	3.8	F value = .15 P value = .708	107
Visited Scotland by male	Yes = 3.4	No = 3.7	F value = .01 P value = .93	106
Visited Scotland by female	Yes = 3.8	No = 3.7	F value = 2.20 P value = .08	

groups gave higher authenticity ratings. The pattern among income groups is more complex, with the highest income group (> \$100,000) giving the highest rating, followed by the lowest income group (< \$20,000). Further, the difference in the mean authenticity ratings by men and women were also tested and found not to be significantly different (P value=0.13).

Next, OLS regression model is used to identify variables that significantly affect the authenticity rating, including both socioeconomic characteristics and heritage characteristics (Table 4). Other variables considered but dropped include “distance traveled”, which was highly correlated with the variable “local”, and “income”, which was insignificant. To test for a curvi-linear effect of age, age squared was also included in a preliminary specification but was dropped because of its statistical insignificance. The final model reveals that age (logged) and nights spent are significantly and positively related to the overall authenticity rating of the games. Even controlling for these variables, those who felt that the games revived personal memories of Scottish heritage had significantly higher authenticity ratings. This variable, more than clan membership or experience visiting Scotland, is closely related to perceptions of authenticity.

Using OLS bivariate regression models, the perceived level of authenticity was analyzed for significant correlation with expenditures (total group expenditures in the host county). Perceived level of authenticity does have a significant coefficient in a model of expenditures with an F value of 4.76 and probability value (N=109 and t value=.41). When the authenticity rating of events increased on a scale of one to five, the total spending also increased. The rating of events perceived as most authentic was also individually regressed on expenditure. Four events with the highest authenticity rating were selected. The perceived authenticity rating of “information on Scottish history” and “setting of the Highland Games” had significant positive coefficients (with a p value of .005 and .07 respectively) in the model of expenditures. Those who gave high authenticity ratings for these events had a tendency to spend more. These results suggest the importance of authenticity to games organizers and local hosts, since it is associated with higher levels of spending.

Table 4. Model of Perceived Authenticity (N=70)

Independent Variables	Parameter	T-stat	P value
Log age	0.173	2.47	0.02
Nights spent	0.146	1.74	0.09
Local	0.147	0.798	0.42
Gender	0.119	0.688	0.49
Clan member	0.596	0.313	0.75
Visited Scotland	-0.294	-1.65	0.10
Revived memories	0.351	0.08	0.08

Intercept: 2.47; F: 2.70; P: .02; R square: .23; R squared: .15.

Finally, empirical analysis was conducted to study the impact of socioeconomic characteristics upon the spending behavior of respondents (Table 5). Scottish heritage variables were also included. Income, postal code, length of stay, gender, distance traveled, number of people per group and "have been to Scotland" did not prove to be significant and were dropped in the final model. The main determinants which explained the spending pattern at the FMHG were found to be "age" and "revival of Scottish memories". Member of a clan when regressed separately upon expenditure was found to be significant with an F value of 3.15 and a p value of .07 (N=110). However, when it was regressed with the memory revival and age variable, it lost its significance. Hence it was dropped from the final model. The results reveal that older people had a tendency to spend more at the Highland games. Those who had personal Scottish memory revival spent more than their counterparts while controlling for age.

CONCLUSION

Staging involves displacement of cultural production from one place to another and modification to fit new conditions of time and place. But it does not necessarily mean superficiality. People migrate all around the world and they take their culture with them. Moreover, the "original" culture changes over time. Ethnic groups hold festivals to promote nostalgia for the past, as well as to strengthen their present cultural ties. MacCannell's (1973) concept of staged authenticity does apply to such scenarios, but staging need not preclude authenticity. In other words, what is staged is not superficial since it contains elements of the original tradition.

The perceived level of authenticity is controlled partly by media and partly by the people themselves. Recent research has shown that heritage events get maximum publicity through word of mouth (Chhabra 2001; interview with the General Manager of the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in 1999). Moreover, authenticity perception in the mind of Scottish Americans may be distorted because they feel far away from their ancestral land. For example, a Scottish American interviewed at the Highland games strongly denied that he would like to return to Scotland. Thus, this person becomes MacCannell's tourist who likes looking at other people's lives (including his/her ancestors') for a short time. For such people, nostalgia is a way to feel humble about their present way of life since they want to believe that beauty

Table 5. Effect of Different Variables on Spending Behavior (N= 100)

Independent Variables	Parameter	T value	P value
Age	0.74	2.52	0.01
Revival of personal Scottish memories	0.03	3.52	0.0007

Intercept: 2.30; F: 11.56; P: .0001; R squared: .18; R squared: .17.

lies elsewhere and they want to keep it far so that they can reach it sometimes. At the same time, they do not want to embrace it because they know that what is beautiful is just a mirage and behind its display lies intense labor, poverty, and suffering. It is interesting to study whether a Scottish festival in California can be seen as more authentic because it is further away from Scotland.

This study is consistent with previous results indicating that heritage tourists are disproportionately middle aged people with high income levels. Since most of them are mature individuals, it is assumed that they know what to expect at the games and will happily gaze. However, comparison of perceptions with a review of literature describing past and present traditions shows that some of their perceptions are distorted. The FMHG survey results reveal Highland dancing to be the event that is perceived as most authentic whereas history shows that it has been progressively modified. Piping, Fiddling, and Border Collies are considered authentic by literature and today's audience as well. While Scottish Highland Games in North Carolina are staged, they are not necessarily inauthentic. The above view is supported by the analysis of tourist perceptions of authenticity. On a one to five scale, with five being most authentic, the Flora MacDonald Games were rated a solid four.

Empirical results reveal important differences in the perceived levels of authenticity among Highland games tourists with different backgrounds and connections to Scottish heritage, especially among women. Those who were very serious about it (for example, members of a clan and women who had been to Scotland) perceived the games to be more authentic than their counterparts. However, in general, there were no differences in the perceived level of authenticity among those who had been to Scotland and those not. A visit to Scotland did not make the tourist a critic of authenticity offered at the games. This supports the indication in literature that the Highland games traditions in the United States brought by immigrants follow the earlier version held in Scotland before the British era. Literature strongly indicates that the Highland games held before the British era (before the Battle of Culloden) had the original traditional ingredients (Jarvie 1991). The present day games held in Scotland may be more modified (since they were revived by the British) than the ones held in the United States.

Further, the authenticity rating was found to be positively related to tourist expenditures. This gives a very important indication to the organizers of Highland games. Authenticity—or more accurately, the perception of it—generates revenue and its preservation is considered important by the tourist. Higher authenticity rating on the Highland games setting and opportunities offered to learn Scottish history were the main determinants of higher spending. With regard to socioeconomic characteristics, it was found that age positively affected expenditure behavior. Members of a clan (when not regressed with other variables) had a tendency to spend more than others. Revival of personal Scottish memories also led to higher spending.

Personal association with Scotland did not have an impact on auth-

enticity rating, nor on higher expenditure behavior. However, the client groups with high perceptions of authenticity generated the maximum revenue. But the perceptions for authenticity go beyond the present criteria set for the games in Scotland. The tourists in the United States are loyal to their ancestral heritage and they show it with their attendance and increased clan memberships, but the roots of their authentic perceptions can be traced to the cultural displacement wave generated by the migration of Scots to the United States.

Since FMHG are annual, they encourage repeat visitation. Approximately 50% were returners. Consistency in the quality of service provided by the games and the region is crucial to maintain existing clientele and target future markets. Promotion of authenticity is a big draw for such markets. In "staging" an event that will be perceived by tourists as authentic, Highland games organizers have to go beyond the depiction of authenticity portrayed by their counterparts in Scotland. As discussed earlier, the present day Highland games in Scotland are a product of heritage revival supported and chosen by the English aristocrats. The "authentic" heritage of Scotland could be traced before this revival wave. All heritage tourism events can draw upon the results to recognize the importance of authenticity for economic benefits (higher expenditures associated with greater perceived authenticity) and culture sustainability (preservation of heritage). **A**

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